

# TOPIC 8: yourCHOICE

## 8: Your Fast Food Order?

### Skill-Based Outcomes

Preteens who participate in this activity will be able to:

- ❖ Determine the fat in a typical fast-food meal.
- ❖ Tell friends how to cut back on fat when they order fast foods.
- ❖ Explain how to eat more fruits, vegetables, and lowfat foods made from milk at fast-food places.
- ❖ Make a healthful snack that's fast and fun!

### Empowerment Messages

- ❖ Many fast foods have a lot of fat and calories. Eating too many high-fat foods is not good for your health.
- ❖ Many fast-food items are bigger than you need. Choose the regular size instead of the deluxe and super sizes.
- ❖ Fast-food places offer choices. Look for fun, tasty ways to include more food variety—including fruits, vegetables, and lowfat foods made from milk—and get less fat in your fast-food meals and snacks.
- ❖ Balance higher fat fast-food choices with lower fat foods for the rest of the day.

## Activity Summary

(Icebreaker) **Fast Food—for You?\*** - A quick, personal look helps preteens discover how much they rely on fast foods and why they need to pay attention to what fast foods they pick.

- 1 Fast Food Facts** - With empty fast-food containers as props, preteens talk about food energy (calories), fat, and calcium in a typical fast-food meal.
- 2 Fitting Fast Foods In** - Preteens measure out fat in a fast-food burger meal and discover that many fast foods have a lot of fat. They use *Nutrition Facts Cards* to fit fast foods into their day's food choices without overdoing on fat; still they eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and calcium-rich foods.
- 3 Advertise for Fast Food** - Preteens have fun, creating and acting out "fast action" advertisements that promote healthful fast-food eating.
- 4 (Afterschool Snack) Pizza—A Fast Snack!** - Preteens prepare Veggie Pita Pizza, a fast-food-type snack, and brainstorm a variety of lowfat pizza toppings.

(Wrap up) **What's yourCHOICE?** - Each person comes up with personal steps for making smart fast-food choices.

\* Adapted from *Jump Start Teens*.

## Getting Ready

### ● Read:

- ❖ Do You Know...? on the next page

### ● Display Posters:

- ❖ *Read It Before You Eat It!*
- ❖ *Feed Me!*
- ❖ *Move It!*
- ❖ *FIGHT BAC!*

### ● Get:

#### For "Fast Food Facts"

- ❖ Empty containers from a fast-food meal: large hamburger, large fries, 16-ounce soda, fried fruit pie. (*Ask preteens to bring containers in a week ahead.*)
- ❖ Large paper, marker, tape (to display the fast-food meal chart on page 97)
- ❖ Shortening, measuring spoons, plate

#### For "Fitting Fast Foods In"

- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards* for planning meals and snacks for the day (a set of cards for each pair or group of preteens)

#### For "Pizza—A Fast Snack!" (snack activity)\*

- ❖ Ingredients: pita rounds, prepared pizza or spaghetti sauce, chopped vegetables (broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms, zucchini), grated cheese
- ❖ Equipment: cutting board; knives; grater; bowls and utensils for sauce, vegetables, and cheese; paper plate and utensil for pita; baking pans; oven (or tabletop or toaster oven); hot pads; turners; measuring spoons and cups
- ❖ Table setting: paper plates, forks, napkins
- ❖ *Nutrition Facts Cards*: pita, spaghetti sauce, broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms, zucchini, cheese

\* If your program has been approved to serve USDA's Afterschool Snacks, the snack served as part of this activity may qualify for reimbursement. For each participant, **serve at least 1 pita round and 1 ounce cheese.**

#### For "Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?"

- ❖ "yourCHOICE" handout\*\* for each participant
- ❖ (Optional) some form of recognition for each participant

\*\* Reminder: Collect handouts for next session.

## Do You Know...?

**Can preteens eat healthfully without giving up fast foods?** Whether they cruise the mall for snacks or head to a local burger or pizza place to eat or socialize, fast-food eating is part of most preteens' lifestyles. To eat for health, they need to know simple ways to make fast-food choices that fit into a healthful way of eating.

### **How much do fast-food meals and snacks rate for nutrition?**

For the nutrition they give you, fast-food meals and snacks tend to be *high* in fat, calories, and sodium **and** *low* in fiber, calcium, and other nutrients. Typically, they're limited in fruits, vegetables, and calcium-rich foods.

Just one fast-food meal can exceed a whole day's fat limit: 60 or more fat grams depending on the food choices. Preteens and teens may need 2,200 to 2,800 calories or more a day depending on their gender, age, growth needs, and activity level. The advice for them is less than 73 to 96 fat grams a day depending on their calorie intake. Eating too many high-fat foods isn't good for your health. Fast-food servings are often big—resulting in more fat and food energy (calories), too.

**How can you enjoy fast foods and still eat healthfully?** There's no reason to give up fast-food eating or feel guilty about enjoying a fast-food meal or snack. Most fast-food places give you choices. These are some simple ways to make healthful fast-food choices that you can enjoy, too:

#### **Less fat**

- ❖ Ask for regular—not deluxe size—burgers, burritos, and tacos. Skip the added bacon, sour cream, or guacamole!
- ❖ Order regular pizza without double cheese.
- ❖ Order a grilled—not fried—chicken sandwich.
- ❖ Eat the chicken meat; skip skin and breading!
- ❖ Skip fries and onion rings. When you do order one of these, ask for the small order, and share it with a friend.
- ❖ Order a baked potato instead of fries or hash browns. Ask for sour cream, butter, or cheese sauce on the side—so you control how much.
- ❖ Skip mayonnaise and tartar sauce. Use catsup, barbecue sauce, or mustard instead.

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**Less sugar**

- ❖ Skip fruit “pies.” Eat a piece of fruit at home later, or tuck an apple or banana in your backpack to eat with your fast-food meal.
- ❖ Skip soda. Order juice, milk, water, or iced tea instead. If you choose soda, have the regular not the large or super-size drink.

**Fewer calories**

- ❖ Follow the tips for “less fat” and “less sugar.” You’ll probably consume fewer calories, too!

**More calcium**

- ❖ Drink milk with your fast-food meal or snack.
- ❖ Order a small milk shake. Since shakes have more calories, cut back on other high-calorie food choices you might eat during the day.
- ❖ Add cheese to your hamburger.
- ❖ For coffee drinkers, drink latte or cappuccino instead of plain coffee.
- ❖ Buy a carton of yogurt if you can.

**More fruits and vegetables**

- ❖ Order fruit smoothies (licuados). They’re often made with lowfat milk or frozen yogurt for more calcium, too.
- ❖ Add tomato, lettuce, and other vegetables to your sandwich.
- ❖ Order your pizza with more veggies: tomatoes, mushrooms, peppers, broccoli, others. For less fat, skip pepperoni and sausage.
- ❖ Have a salad instead of fries. Use reduced-fat or fat-free dressing, or use just a little regular dressing.

**More tips**

- ❖ Be adventurous. For something new, try different kinds of fast foods: wraps (sandwiches in soft tortillas), veggie sandwiches on whole-wheat bread, stuffed spuds (baked potatoes topped with chili or steamed vegetables), sushi, others.
- ❖ Be sensible. For all kinds of fast foods, order regular-size servings most of the time. Share an order with a friend.
- ❖ Be flexible. Balance your choices. If you eat more high-fat fast foods at one meal, pick low-fat foods the rest of the day.

**Tips for Leaders:**

At this age, young adolescents should not be over concerned with precise numbers or measures of foods or nutrients. Instead, they should understand the benefits and apply general guidelines to choosing amounts and types of foods and physical activity. Avoid giving too much emphasis to calories or fat grams.

## yourCHOICE Your Fast Food Order?

### Topic 8 Activities

## Getting Started: Fast Food—for You?

*Have preteens take a quick look at their fast-food eating habits to see why they need to pay attention to their fast-food choices.*

#### Start by having them:

- ❖ Raise one hand if you ate at a fast-food place once this week.
- ❖ Raise two hands if you ate at a fast-food place two times this week.
- ❖ Stand up if you ate at a fast-food place three or more times this week.
- ❖ **Talk about** how much they usually spend each time they buy fast food.

**Have them look around to see how many people have their hands raised or are standing up.** Have preteens think about how much they spend on fast food.

- ❖ **POINT OUT** that most of the money preteens spend on eating out goes to fast-food restaurants.
- ❖ **ASK:**
  - Why do you eat at fast-food places?
  - Do you think fast-food places notice that preteens buy a lot of fast foods? What makes you think so? Why do fast foods appeal to preteens?

**Continue with the discussion.** Keep the discussion open-ended so preteens talk freely, and everyone gets a chance to share his or her thoughts.

- ❖ You either had one or two hands up or you stood up to show how often you eat at fast-food places. Does it matter what you eat there? Why?
- ❖ What three fast foods do you buy most often? Why? Where do they fit in on the *Feed Me!* poster?
- ❖ Would you buy different foods if they were on the menu? Why or why not?

## Activity 1: Fast Food Facts

*Have preteens discover more about nutrition in a typical fast-food meal. It's a way to help them make healthier choices when they eat out.*

Show some empty containers from a typical fast-food meal. Have them imagine that these containers hold a large hamburger with lettuce and tomato, large fries, a 16-ounce soda, and a fried apple pie. **ASK:**

- ❖ How many of you have eaten this meal or a similar meal recently?
- ❖ How would you rate it for taste? Healthful eating? Fun? Other?

Give preteens a chance to start exploring nutrients in fast foods.

- ❖ Display nutrition information for a fast-food meal they imagined, and then talk about it. **POINT OUT:** They can get nutrition information at many fast-food places if they ask.

Food	Calories	Fat Grams	Fat % Daily Value	Calcium % Daily Value
Large hamburger with lettuce and tomato	512	27	41%	6%
Large fries	355	19	29%	2%
16-ounce soda	200	0	0%	0%
Fried apple pie	265	14	22%	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,332</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>14%</b>

❖ Encourage them to check the chart to find out about fat in these foods.

**ASK:**

- Do you think these foods have a little or a lot of fat? The *Read It Before You Eat It!* poster can help them talk about the % DVs for fat and calcium.
- How about the whole meal?

❖ To visualize, encourage them to figure out how many teaspoons of fat this fast-food meal has then measure it out using shortening for each food. (One teaspoon of shortening weighs 4 grams.) **POINT OUT:** Eating less fat helps keep your heart healthy.

**Challenge them to uncover more about this fast-food meal.** Talk about the food energy (calories), fat, limited amounts of fruits and vegetables, etc.

**ASK:**

- ❖ How would this meal fit into your energy needs for the day? (*Provides a lot of calories—about 50% or more of the food energy you need for the day*)  
What happens when you eat more calories (food energy) than your body uses? (*Gain weight*)
- ❖ What if you order a regular instead of a large size? **POINT OUT:** Many fast-food items are oversized. And large amounts of foods mean more fat and more calories.
- ❖ How can you change this meal to have less fat? More fruits and vegetables? More calcium-rich foods? **Have them use the *Feed Me!* poster and *Nutrition Facts Cards* for ideas.** **POINT OUT:** It's important to know how to cut back fat and boost calcium in fast-food meals, since many preteens eat these meals a lot.



## Activity 2: Fitting Fast Foods In

*Have preteens figure out how to fit their favorite fast foods into a whole day of healthful eating.*

Refer to the empty fast-food containers again. (ASK:)

- ❖ If you eat this fast-food meal, what can you eat the rest of the day for more calcium and less fat? (POINT OUT:) It's easier to balance the day's food choices for fat if smaller amounts of high-fat fast foods are eaten.

Divide into pairs or small groups. Use *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *Feed Me!* poster to plan and compare:

- ❖ **a full day's menu *without fast foods*.** Their menu plan for meals and snacks should have: (1) *100% DV or less* for fat, (2) *100% DV or more* for calcium, and (3) between 2,200 and 2,800 calories. (POINT OUT:) Active girls and less active boys may use up about 2,200 calories for energy, and the more active boys may use up about 2,800 calories.
- ❖ **a full day's menu *with a fast-food meal*.** Try to stick to the same guideline: (1) *100% DV or less* for fat, (2) *100% DV or more* for calcium, and (3) between 2,200 and 2,800 calories.

Have the groups share their 2 days' menus (without fast foods and with a fast-food meal) and how they cut back the fat and boosted the calcium. (ASK:)

- ❖ Was it easy or hard to fit fast foods in? Why? How did you do it?
- ❖ Now, how do you feel about fast-food eating? Why is healthier fast-food eating important to you?
- ❖ How can you make healthier fast-food choices the next time you order?

## Activity 3: Advertise for Fast Food

*Have fun with food advertisements! Have preteens create and act out a TV or computer advertisement for healthful fast-food eating.*

**Focus their creative juices by asking:**

- ❖ What TV or computer advertisements (ads) really grab your attention? Why?
- ❖ What might work if you want to sell something to preteens your age?
- ❖ Why do preteens like fast foods? How can they make healthier fast-food choices?
- ❖ How can advertisers get that message across to you?
- ❖ What else can fast-food chains do? **Encourage them to be creative:** for example, make healthier fast foods fun, appealing, and easy to see; offer coupons for healthier menu items; use high-tech promotions; involve celebrities; put “clickable” ads on the computer; make a music video about healthier fast foods.

**Divide into groups of four or five preteens.** Take about 10 minutes to create a “fast action,” fast-food advertisement—one that tries to get preteens their age to make healthier fast-food choices. They can make it:

- ❖ Simple: one or two empowering messages
- ❖ Short: 30 to 60 seconds
- ❖ Clever, fun, and memorable

**Present the fast-food ads to everyone,** and talk about the messages.

## Activity 4: Pizza—A Fast Snack!

*Make Veggie Pita Pizza for practice while choosing lowfat pizza toppings.*

### Prepare Veggie Pita Pizzas:

- ❖ **Give preteens a chance to wash their hands before handling food.**

Talk about this food safety tip. Refer to the messages on the *FIGHT BAC!* poster.

**Food safety-smarts:** Put your backpack on the floor not the counter or table where you put food. Keep everything clean in the kitchen or wherever you eat.

- ❖ **While the groups finish sharing their fast-food ads, ask two or more preteens to get the snack ingredients ready:** Rinse and chop broccoli, bell pepper, mushrooms, and zucchini then serve in bowls with spoons; grate cheese and serve in bowl with spoon; arrange pita rounds on a paper plate with utensil to serve; pour pizza sauce in a bowl with spoon to serve; set out baking pans with hot pads and turners; put paper plates, forks, and napkins on the table.
- ❖ **Have each preteen assemble his or her veggie pita pizza:** Spoon pizza sauce onto one pita round. Top with chopped vegetables and grated cheese. Bake them in an oven (or tabletop or toaster oven) at 375 °F until the cheese melts, about 10 minutes.

While the veggie pita pizzas bake, **encourage preteens to discover more ways to make healthful pizza choices.** Have them use the *Nutrition Facts Cards* and the *Feed Me!* and *Read It Before You Eat It!* posters to talk about the crust, sauce, and pizza toppings.

- ❖ Can pizza be a healthful snack or meal choice? Why?
- ❖ How do pizza toppings compare for less fat? More fiber? More calcium? More vitamin A or C? **Use the “5-20” guide** to decide. *Hint:* their toppings are partial servings.
- ❖ How can you “load” more vegetables and fruits on a pizza?
- ❖ Will you make pita pizza at home? How? For whom? What other lowfat toppings might you put on for a tasty change?
- ❖ Suppose you were at a restaurant. What might your pizza order be like? Why?

## Wrapping Up: What's yourCHOICE?

Wrap up by making “yourCHOICE” action plans for smarter fast-food choices.

Review what they learned about this topic. **ASK:**

- ❖ Why is it smart to pay attention to what and how much you eat at fast-food places? **Talk about** the calories, fat, and other nutrients in typical fast-food choices.
- ❖ How can you and your friends eat fast foods with less fat? More calcium? More fruits and vegetables? Less sugar?
- ❖ What changes can you make for healthier fast-food eating? Why? **Talk about the goals and actions** they can take to make smarter fast-food choices. *(For example, GOAL: Eat smaller amounts of high-fat foods at fast-food restaurants. Actions: Order a regular not a deluxe-size burger or fries. Share nachos and cheese with a friend. Walk with friends to a park not to the fast-food place at the mall.)*

On their “yourCHOICE” handout, have each person write a goal and three steps he or she can take this week to make fast-food choices count for healthful eating. (Note: At the next session, ask them what actions they actually took.)

Have the participants see how they did with the goal and action steps each person wrote on their own “yourCHOICE” handout for the last topic. They can check (✓) the steps they took so far. (Optional) Each person who took at least one action receives some form of recognition.

Collect their handouts to use in upcoming sessions.